



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

BM06:161

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, October 25, 2006

Contact: Ashley Giovannettone
916-653-6575

California Secretary of State Bruce McPherson and Major Latino Organizations Send Official Election Letter Refuting Orange County Intimidation Letter

Letter sent to all 14,000 recipients of previous letter

SACRAMENTO, CA - Secretary of State Bruce McPherson announced today that his office and Latino organizations sent an official election information letter to all of the recipients of the voter intimidation letter sent to 14,000 voters last week. The official election information letter, in English and Spanish, was mailed by the Secretary of State's Office in collaboration with the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO).

"Voter intimidation in any form is completely unacceptable," said Secretary McPherson. "Voters who received the intimidation letter should ignore it and cast their ballot on Election Day. As Chief Elections Officer, it is my job to ensure our elections are conducted with the utmost honesty and integrity, and to reach out to new voters and encourage every eligible Californian to participate in our democratic process."

To determine voter eligibility, a voter must be: 18 years of age on or before election day, a resident of California, a United States citizen (including a naturalized citizen), not in prison or on parole for conviction of a felony and not judicially determined to be mentally incompetent. First time voters may be required to show identification when they vote. There are a number of acceptable forms of identification, ranging from a driver's license to a utility bill.

"Anyone interested in the health of our democracy should stand against voter intimidation tactics of any kind, no matter the ethnicity, background, or affiliation of the voters being targeted," said Janet Murguia, President and CEO of the National Council of La Raza, adding, "We stand with our Latino community, and urge all Latinos and all other eligible voters to cast their vote this November 7 without hesitation."

John Trasvina, MALDEF Interim President and General Counsel, "We applaud the Secretary of State's action to inform voters they should not be intimidated to give up their precious right to vote."

-more-

Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of the NALEO Educational Fund said, "Our core mission at the NALEO Educational Fund is to empower Latinos to be full participants in the American political process. This collaboration will help ensure that all eligible voters in Orange County have the opportunity to participate in this November's elections," added Vargas. "As diversity has helped this country move forward we must continue to strengthen our democratic process by protecting everyone's right to vote," concluded Vargas.

Last week, Secretary of State McPherson held a press conference with NCLR, MALDEF and NALEO to announce his efforts to communicate to affected voters his efforts to ensure the integrity of the vote.

Secretary McPherson has partnered with NALEO and La Opinion to insert more than 350,000 registration cards into issues of La Opinion. He has also partnered with thousands of organizations all over California to encourage every eligible voter to register and vote.

Attached is a copy of the official election information letter (the letter was sent in both English and Spanish to all 14,000 recipients of the previous letter). For more information please call the Secretary of State's Press Office at 916-653-6575.



**SECRETARY OF STATE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

URGENT --- OFFICIAL ELECTION INFORMATION

October 24, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam:

You may have recently received a letter with false and misleading information about your right to vote in California.

We are writing to inform you that the Secretary of State's Office and Latino civil rights organizations agree: You should ignore that letter. It was unauthorized and inaccurate. An investigation is going on now to determine who sent the letter.

Voting is one of the most important rights and duties of American citizenship. You are encouraged to participate and vote in the upcoming November 7, 2006 General Election!

The purpose of this notice is to inform you of the official state requirements to register and vote.

Immigrants who become naturalized United States citizens are eligible to register and vote in elections in California. The other requirements to register to vote are to be 18 years old on or before Election Day, a resident of California, a United States citizen (including a naturalized citizen), not in prison or on parole for conviction of a felony, and not judicially determined to be mentally incompetent.

Because of a new federal law, if you are a first-time voter who registered to vote by mail you may have to show a form of identification when you vote, such as your utility bill or bank statement that includes your name and address.

There is still time to vote absentee. The last day an application to vote absentee can be received by your county elections office for the November 7, 2006 General Election is October 31st. There is an application to vote by mail contained in your sample ballot.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR FOR ANY QUESTIONS, YOU CAN CALL
THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE AT 1-800-345-VOTE (8683) OR
1-800-232-VOTA (8682) OR YOU CAN VISIT WWW.SS.CA.GOV**



Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund





**SECRETARY OF STATE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

URGENTE — INFORMACIÓN OFICIAL SOBRE LAS ELECCIONES

24 de octubre de 2006

Estimado señor/señora:

Usted puede haber recibido recientemente una carta con información falsa y engañosa sobre su derecho de votar en California.

Le estamos escribiendo para informarle que la Secretaría de Estado y las organizaciones de derechos civiles de hispanos están de acuerdo: No hay que hacer caso a esa carta. Fue inexacta y no autorizada. En este momento se está realizando una investigación para determinar quién envió la carta.

Votar es uno de los derechos y obligaciones más importantes de la ciudadanía estadounidense. ¡Lo instamos a que participe y vote en las próximas elecciones generales del 7 de noviembre de 2006!

El propósito de este aviso es informarle los requisitos oficiales del estado para inscribirse y votar.

Los inmigrantes naturalizados como ciudadanos se pueden inscribir para votar y votar en las elecciones en California. Los otros requisitos para inscribirse a votar son: tener al menos 18 años de edad en el día de la elección o antes, ser residente de California, ser ciudadano de Estados Unidos (incluyendo ciudadanos naturalizados), no estar en la prisión ni bajo libertad supervisada por haber sido condenado de un delito mayor y no haber sido determinado mentalmente incompetente por un juez.

Debido a una nueva ley federal, si vota por primera vez y se inscribió para votar por correo, es posible que tenga que mostrar algún tipo de identificación cuando se presente para votar, como por ejemplo una factura de servicios públicos como el gas, teléfono o luz o un estado de cuenta bancario que contenga su nombre y dirección.

Todavía está a tiempo para votar en ausencia. El último día en que la oficina electoral de su condado puede recibir una solicitud de votante ausente para las elecciones generales del 7 de noviembre es el 31 de octubre. Su balota de muestra contiene una solicitud de votar por correo.

**PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN O CUALQUIER DUDA, PUEDE LLAMAR
A LA SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO, AL 1-800-345-VOTE (8683) Ó AL
1-800-232-VOTA (8682) O PUEDE VISITAR WWW.SS.CA.GOV**